

SRIMADBHAGAVADGITA

Summary on

Ninth Chapter

by

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SUMMARY (NINTH CHAPTER)

- Note: 1. Portions in brackets are supplied ideas.
2. Numbers in brackets indicate the verses.

[In the eighth chapter, *saguṇa-upāsanā* was pointed out as a means to attain *krama-mukti*. In fact, it was an incidental topic. The aim of the Lord is not to teach *saguṇa-upāsanā* as a means for *krama-mukti*. The main purpose of *upāsanā* is to qualify oneself to know the true nature of the Lord and attain liberation in this life itself (*jīvanmukti*). Thus, the Lord wants to teach *upāsanā* mainly as a preparatory step to knowledge. This was done in the seventh chapter. *Kṛṣṇa* brings out this idea in this chapter also.]

In the first three verses, *Kṛṣṇa* introduces the topic, its glory, and the qualifications needed for its pursuit. The topic is the knowledge of God in both the *saguṇa* and the *nirguṇa* forms (*jñāna* and *vijñāna*). It is the most secret and sacred knowledge which releases one from bondage. It is the easiest to pursue and immediate in giving the result. The seeker should have faith in the teacher and the teaching if the pursuit should be fruitful.

In the next three verses (4 to 6), the Lord reveals His true nature. He pervades the entire universe. Still, He is not related to anything. In fact, there is no universe other than God. Yet, it appears because of His *māyā*. He is ever non-dual and relationless like space (*kevala* and *asaṅga*).

Then *Kṛṣṇa* comes down and redefines Himself accepting the universe (7 to 10). He is the basis for the origin, existence, and dissolution of the entire universe (*jagat-kāraṇam*). Blessed by God, His *prakṛti* which is inseparable from Him, keeps the cycle of creation going. Though the Lord's presence is inevitable for all these phenomena, He is not involved in any one of them as doer or enjoyer. He is *akartā* and *abhoktā*.

In the 11th verse, *Kṛṣṇa* talks about the cause of bondage. Because of the fundamental ignorance, no one knows the nature of God. Consequently, He is mistaken for a human being with birth, form, etc. (Thus it is due to ignorance and the consequent delusion regarding the nature of God — and oneself — that one gets bound).

Though ignorance is universal, many do not accept the fact. Hence, they never attempt to get rid of it. Believing neither in the scriptures nor in the established traditions, these atheists take to evil ways as directed by their instincts and waste their precious life (12).

On the other hand, there are some noble people who clearly recognise their bondage and worship the Lord, seeking Him alone to get out of the bondage (13,14). *Kṛṣṇa* points out here that various devotees worship Him in manifold ways. Some worship God as identical with themselves, some as different from themselves, and some as everything (15). In this context, the Lord describes His cosmic form i.e., *viśvatomukhatvam* (16 to 19).

In the next three verses, *Bhagavān* talks about two types of devotees — those who seek various finite ends through Him (*sakāma-bhaktas*) and those who seek the infinite God only (*niṣkāma-bhaktas*). The Lord points out that the worship for finite ends will be definitely fruitful. But, being finite they cannot last long. Even the attainment of heavens is finite only (20,21). A *niṣkāma-bhakta* worships God seeking nothing else. The Lord promises to take care of even the worldly well-being of such a *bhakta* because he has renounced all his worldly pursuits (22).

From verse 23rd to 29th, the Lord stresses the point that whether one should continue in *saṁsāra* (bondage) or attain *mokṣa* (liberation) is one's own choice (*puruṣārtha*). When people seek finite goals through the worship of other deities, they are invoking the finite aspects of that one infinite God alone (23). All their prayers go to that one God only. But the result is still finite because they invoke and seek the finite only. (The amount of water we can fetch from the ocean depends on what vessel we take.) Thus, they miss the infinite

due to ignorance (24). Though the Lord is capable of giving everything, He can give only what the devotee is willing to receive. Hence, the Lord says that one gets what one seeks (25). What type of worship must one do to attain the infinite? *Bhagavān* says that the worship is the simplest for a *niškāma-bhakta*. He can offer anything. The attitude is important (26). Even if that is not possible, one should convert every action into worship by (mentally) offering it at the feet of the Lord (27). Such a *bhakta* is a *karma-yogī* (because he continues to act with equanimity) as well as a *sannyāsī* (because he renounces the concern for the results). He becomes purified and liberated soon by getting the teaching of the scriptures through a *guru* (28). *Kṛṣṇa* concludes this topic by reemphasising that He is available to all. It is for us to claim Him or not (29).

In the last five verses, Lord *Kṛṣṇa* glorifies *bhakti*. The greatness of *bhakti* is that even those who are not qualified for self-knowledge because of their past sins, weakness, extrovertedness, or dullness can take to *bhakti* and achieve the goal. Thus, *bhakti* is universal. The devotee will never perish. In conclusion, *Kṛṣṇa* sums up the pursuit of *bhakti* thus — “Fix your mind on Me; be My devotee; keep Me as your goal; be My worshipper; surrender to Me. Thus fixing the mind, you will attain Me alone who am the Self”.

(Here, we should note that *bhakti* — whether it is taken as constant love of God or meditation on *saguṇa-īśvara*, cannot directly take one to the goal. It can take one to a *guru* only. One has to gain Self-knowledge by the study of the scriptures under a *guru*. This alone can lead one directly to liberation.)

The main topics of this chapter are:

1. Introduction to the knowledge, its glory,
and necessary qualifications..... 1 to 3
2. Nature of God..... 4 to 10
3. Cause of bondage.. 11
4. Atheists, theists and types of *upāsana*..... 12 to 19

SUMMARY

5. *Sakāma-bhaktas* and *niṣkāma-bhaktas*..... 20 to 29
6. Glory of *bhakti*..... 30 to 34

Since this chapter deals with the knowledge of God which is the greatest (*rājavidyā*) and the rarest (*rājaguhya*), it is titled as *Rājavidyārājaguhya-yoga*.
